

*Academical Experiences
of the Germ. Renaissance*

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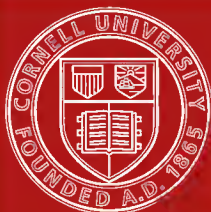
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THE GERMAN RENASCENCE.



ON SOME
ACADEMICAL EXPERIENCES
OF THE
GERMAN RENASCENCE.

*AN ADDRESS INTRODUCTORY TO THE SESSION 1878-9
OF THE OWENS COLLEGE, MANCHESTER.*

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THIS Address, which lays no claim to any other character, is printed as it was delivered, with the addition of a few passages omitted in delivery for want of time. I should like to be allowed to add, that I sincerely dislike printing anything without references to authorities; but I do not wish to lengthen these pages by citing the works which I have used in the present instance.

A. W. W.

ON SOME ACADEMICAL EXPERIENCES OF THE GERMAN RENASCENCE.

AMONG the many devices of the Renaissance age there is one consisting of two words, engraved over a scholar's door, which, though it seems to breathe the atmosphere of a world where it is always Long Vacation, I may perhaps not inappropriately quote to you to-day. Inscriptions, even when they are not epitaphs, must not be read all too literally; and there seems something of irony in the contrast between sentiment and experience, when one remembers the life of the man who chose for his motto,—I might almost say when one remembers the fate of the house for which the motto was chosen,—*Beata tranquillitas*! Blessed is tranquillity. For in many ways this life was a far from tranquil one, and the house which long sheltered it was in the end sacked by that natural enemy of all tranquillity—a mob with a cry. And if it is most true, in the words which Landor puts into the mouth of Machiavelli, that ‘the sleeper is more tranquil than the wide-awake, and the dead even than he’—then the tranquillity enjoyed within the walls which bore this placid legend was something very different from the repose of night and the stillness of the tomb.

For here dwelt one of the foremost representatives in the Germany of the Renaissance and Reformation period of a band of men whose zeal and energy helped to recast the intellectual life of their nation and age. Here was the chosen meeting-place of a company of scholars, eloquent with the part-recovered wealth of classic speech, disdainful of the formulæ and methods which had sufficed for generations of their predecessors, and ready to conspire, like Attic tyrannicides, with the weapons of their invective wrapt in the evergreen of the new old learning. Here Conrad Muth—better known as Mutianus Rufus (though why Rufus, is one of the buried secrets of Renaissance nomenclature),—Canon of Gotha, the acknowledged father, and for a time the leader, of the humanists of the University of Erfurt in Thuringia, spent much of his life among books and manuscripts—treasures brought from beyond the Alps, where in his youth he had associated with Baptista Mantuanus and Picus of Mirandola, and now, with a hospitality liberal of something more than ‘the frolic wine,’ distributed by him among his chosen guests. Long and laboriously had he sought, and but imperfectly was he destined to enjoy, what he proclaimed a scholar’s truest blessing. After boyhood he had passed through many years of what he calls lucubrations, exiles, peregrinations, and discomforts manifold, sustained for the love of letters. Trained together with Erasmus in the famous school of Deventer, the seminary of so much that is greatest and noblest in the movement of the German Renaissance, he had, like Erasmus and a thousand others, led a wandering

life, which had however at last brought him home to the neighbourhood of his old Thuringian University. Erfurt, of whose significance in German university history I shall have more to say, was then in a transition stage. If the proverb still held good, according to which 'he who wishes really to study goes to Erfurt,' the direction of its studies themselves was beginning to change, and the times had not yet disclosed the meaning of another and more mysterious proverb—'Erforda Praga'—Erfurt is Prague. For it was Prague where Huss had taught and preached, and whence he had gone forth to trial and death.

After this, for a time the life of Mutianus becomes more generally typical of many a scholar's experience. When a firm footing seems to have been gained, and the span of manhood's years seems to stretch out with the promise of a long vista of usefulness, there enter self-confidence and scorn of the pedants satisfied to tread the accustomed paths ; and in the course of time the field of congenial labour having been diligently cultivated, there is something of a harvest reaped and more of seed sown. But the reaction begins almost with the fruition ; the world—even the little world around us—while it moves, to be sure, will not change all as the student wishes ; the current of the Renaissance enters into the current of the Reformation, which he hesitates and then declines to join ; the younger men and their aspirings begin to outrun the desires of those who set their highest hopes upon a future which others than they are to control ; till at last come the beginnings of repose, at the cost of

estrangement from those who are unwilling or unable to submit. And it is well if the multitude outside do not take upon itself to fret and rage against a simple and a useful life as against the superfluity of idleness, as did the Gotha mob when, headed by fanatic preachers, it plundered the house of Mutianus, with those of his brother-canons, in the name of that Reformation for which, askance though he looked upon its progress, he too had helped to prepare the way. Doubts, difficulties, and controversies—the lot of men to misunderstand and be misunderstood—all these are not shut out by the door of a student's library, any more than by the planks of a ship or the portals of a palace ; it is only in neatly constructed allegories that such a seclusion really secludes.

And yet the motto of Mutianus has a very real meaning, which may come home to us with special force as we on this morning in our College also stand upon a threshold—the threshold of a new period of academical study. The tranquillity to which our typical Renaissance scholar looked forward, and which in some degree it was his to enjoy, was not the tranquillity of isolation—such as some men no doubt have sought in colleges as well as in retreats sacred to religious meditation alone. What he sought and in some measure found was the satisfaction of accomplishing, partly *with* others, partly *through* others, his share of the intellectual task he saw opening before his age. There is perhaps no class of men in reviewing whose lives and labours we have the connectedness and continuity of all effective human effort more

cheerily brought home to us than the class to which scholars and men of science belong; and it is but natural to seek in the records and reminiscences of institutions where such men have worked together under common conditions and often with common ends for evidence of the strength which lies in union. Nothing, says Mutianus, is more beneficial to the scholar than literary companionship; and such companionship—whether between teachers or learners, or in mingled mutuality—is of the very essence of academical life. Our modesty will prevent us from applying too specifically the words of another and greater student, the very flower of the academical aspect of the Reformation, whose title of *præceptor Germaniæ* fails to measure the extent of his influence. ‘There are,’ says Melancthon, ‘no more pleasant and no firmer friendships than philosophic friendships. I mean those of scholars contracted in the companionship of studies. Not even the friendship of Lælius and Scipio would have been so sweet had they been strangers to the Muses.’ And we may deem it to savour of over-legislation when in several of the old college-statutes at Oxford and Cambridge we find such desires expressed as this: ‘That the fellows who are willing to walk out should seek each other’s society, and walk together, conversing with each other in pairs on scholarship or on some proper and pleasant topic, and so return betimes.’ But though the gentle pressure intimated in the one case may not invariably have produced the results extolled in the other, it seems but little necessary to dwell on the truism that a common

academical life is the very nurse and foster-mother of individual intellectual effort. Assuredly, even in those directions in which academical studies have pre-eminently pointed, great things have been accomplished by what is called self-help, if you like to give it that vague name ; Erasmus himself indulged in the vanity of calling himself an *autodidact* ; and few of us are strangers to challenges pointed by such remarks as this, that Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* is not due to Oxford, or Grote's *Greece* to any university. Other voices have been heard to proclaim the incontrovertible fact that the achievements of genius are primarily ascribable to no methods of training, whether academical or other. *Quis negavit ?* Who, even without examining how far even in such cases academical training may have *indirectly* contributed its influence, is inclined to deny the extraordinary and exceptional phenomena of mental power, energy, and endurance ? But who on the other hand that knows the uncertainty and the unrest of solitary study, that has watched the process by which a band of fellow-workers becomes (to call it by the old name) a *school* of learning and research, can doubt the beneficent influence of means which, in one form or another, no epoch of civilisation has been able to forego ? The Renaissance age was in its way singularly alive to the uses of associated study ; and if I may speak of different times, I may say in passing that there is no side of modern university life better worth not only preserving, but developing, than that of combination in study. Between teachers and learners the laboratory and the seminary,

among learners their own associations connected with the studies of their academical life, are the real and necessary supplements of the lecture-room.

But however and under whatever circumstances he may carry on his labours, the tranquillity of the atmosphere in which the student is to feel at home will primarily depend on the end which he proposes to himself in them. For of course the real tranquilliser of the mind is the sense of freedom, and it is this sense with which every true scholar, every true man of science, every true votary of the *liberal* arts, is privileged to become endowed. Not to be gained at once, or gained without toil, yet it is denied to none who are patient and true, and who, however gladly they may welcome the accidents of recognition of success, perhaps of fame, refuse to see even in these the ends of their lives and labours as students. Just as a well-organised system of university education should carefully lead from a common basis of sound general training to the several main branches of study, and in these again leave room for the closer pursuit of special lines of research, so the student who aims at *much* will, without closing his eyes to the connexion of studies, eschew discursiveness so far as possible in the conduct of his own, until at last he has suited them to the tastes and talents with which he is gifted and which his opportunities have enabled him to cultivate. When he has ascertained and tried these—a time which comes sooner to some, later, but not the less surely to others, and which it should be the object of every well-devised academical system not to exclude

from its possibilities—then, under whatever conditions it may be his lot to prosecute his task, he may work on to the end in tranquillity. For that freedom will be his which belongs to harmony between the work and the worker; and whether ere his day closes he has gathered in or but sown or merely turned the sod, it is he of whom the poet's words are true, that 'time is his inheritance, and time the field he tills.'

It does not however escape me that to some of my hearers such views may seem to soar inconveniently out of distance from certain landmarks in the ordinary course of a student's life, which perhaps even those of you who are to-day beginning yours may not feel inclined to regard with absolute tranquillity of spirit. The scholar whose device I borrowed was not himself dumb on the subject of the value of academical degrees; indeed, it so happens that two sayings of his are preserved which represent the two extremes of opinion on the matter. In his inmost soul Mutianus cherished that lofty contempt for mere 'brands' with which it is difficult altogether to disavow a certain sympathy; in fact, he anticipated the friendly counsel which was, I remember, not long ago offered to the authorities of our own College, recommending them to set the example of a university unembarrassed by such meaningless, or at all events fluid distinctions as B.A., M.A., or D.D. 'Where Reason presides,' he remarked with much truth, 'there no Doctors are requisite.' But he was at the same time shrewdly alive to the possibility that (in the eyes of an unreasoning public) it would be a considerable advantage

for his friends, the men of the New Learning, to bear the accustomed brand. 'I should strongly advise you,' he writes, under a more worldly impulse, to his friend Urbanus, 'to obtain the title of Master of Arts, in order that under this mask *terreas infantes in tenebris*—you may awe the babes in the dark.' Perhaps the superstitious reverence for mere academical titles has not altogether vanished even in a different age and nation, although there are discriminating eyes enough wide open to use the light of publicity around them. But in any case it would be worse than idle to attempt to illustrate existing systems of university graduation—such as those of our own country at the present day—by any historical pseudo-analogies. Opinions may differ as to what an academical degree should imply—whether the mere passing of an examination-test of knowledge acquired and digested, of power trained and matured, even of actual worth accomplished—or besides this, a fixed period of residence at a recognised place of academical education, in which latter case it will additionally indicate the certainty that its recipient has undergone, and the probability that he has benefited by, the influences which, as I have said, are of the very essence of academical life. Opinions may differ as to the relations in which examination should stand to teaching, whether the latter should practically be depressed into dependent preparation for the former, or whether examination should be an accompaniment and test of education, to the regulation of which the conductors of that education should have something

to say. But there can be only one opinion as to the principle that when a degree implies the passing of an examination-test (and of those which signify *less* than this I think it unnecessary to speak), then the nature and conditions of that test should be (as they are in all our national universities) open to public ken and criticism; and the administering of that test should, where public policy deems it desirable (as, in fact, it has in the case of some of our universities) be partly in hands directly responsible to the State. Under these circumstances, and under this double guarantee, any national university which should attempt to lower the existing level of degrees, or to trifle with the proper bestowal of its own, would condemn itself with an openness irreconcilable with the dictates of ordinary prudence—to say nothing of ordinary public spirit.

From the student's point of view only a word need be added. So long as he is possessed by the mere sense that he is gradually compassing the *quantum sufficit* for any degree or other examination, by the mere consciousness that he is acquiring the power—which men *acquire*, but with which machines are born—of 'turning out' a certain amount of results, he has not yet crossed the inner threshold. The old academical term of *honours*—distinctions which, as you know, do not follow a man's name through life like the B.A. and the M.A., which it would be worth the Postmaster-General's while to prohibit on the outside of letters—this term itself implies that only he who does more than suffices is entitled to regard;

and though it is the name of the Senior Wrangler only which used to go forth to the world at the midnight hour, yet any effort which strives for more than is necessary is the work of a true student's spirit. Still nobler is the stimulus which impels him to work on for the sake of the work itself, and for the gratitude, nameless though it be, of all those whom the progress of knowledge benefits. Our degree-lists will not suffer if such are the motives of our exertions;—and so, though the mediæval custom has become unfamiliar to most modern Colleges, according to which older and younger, masters, bachelors, and scholars, dignified and undignified, sat in common on the students' benches, we may all have our share in the tranquillity which is alike removed from stagnation and from unrest.

The motto of Mutianus seemed to me naturally to suggest a few reflexions which have only repeated part of what, in one shape or another, must be in the minds of many of us on an occasion like the present. I had met with it in the course of some readings in a chapter of university and general educational history, which has long appeared to me to possess special interest and significance. And this not only, or so much, because the chapter I have in view belongs to the history of a nation whose academical life has been of signally great importance for its progress and destinies, and to the history of an age among the most prominent features of which the reform of existing and the foundation of new universities hold a con-

spicuous place. Nothing is at once easier and more delusive than to find half-resemblances between the tendencies and conditions of different ages and nations, and I have always thought the drawing of so-called historical parallels between ages, as between individual personages in them, a peculiarly precarious kind of intellectual exercise. The statesman, though he both uses and values the experience of the past, has to deal not only with the needs but with the forces of the present; and whatever plans or schemes, for instance, those who are interested in questions of university policy in this country may have in view, it is the conditions of our own age and nation by which their issue will and must be determined. But it cannot be idle for those who like ourselves live in a land of intellectual activity, nowhere more marked than in educational life and in the growing demands made upon its means and opportunities, to note some of the elements in the educational efforts of a kindred people at a period when it was signally awakened to this branch of its national duties, and to ask ourselves whether in any of them we can recognise factors *indispensable* to all true progress in this momentous direction of national activity.

Without making any comparisons of which lack of time would prevent me from stating the grounds, I think it incontestable that nowhere in that wonderful age which stands midway between two great divisions of history, and shares so many of the characteristics of both, was the movement we call the Renaissance in the great majority of its phases at once so arduous and so

serious, so elevated in the scope and so broadly popular in the range of its endeavours, as in Germany. Much—in some respects singularly much—had to be done here ; and not the least in the enlarging and extending of the opportunities of academical study and training which Germany had been late among the nations of the West in offering to her sons. Of them, too, some of the most illustrious in learning and in letters had sat on the benches or filled the chairs of the greatest of the mediæval universities, the University of Paris ; whose long-enduring attractiveness to Germans is attested by a list full of illustrious names, from Albertus Magnus downwards, including a poet such as Walther von der Vogelweide, a preacher such as Geiler von Kaisersberg, with not a few of the men whom we Protestants are apt rather unceremoniously to claim as precursors of the Reformation, and not altogether ending even with the two eyes of Germany, Erasmus, and Reuchlin. But, though undoubtedlly Paris had, as at all times, owed something of her power of attracting foreigners to the foreigners themselves, no German rival had, like our English Oxford, at any time wrested from that university the leadership in philosophic thought and teaching. The remoteness of the seats of the earliest universities in the empire (Prague had been founded in 1347, and Vienna in 1365) must in any case have prevented them from becoming real rivals to the great place of learning in the West. Even after universities had begun to be established on or near the Rhine (Heidelberg, 1386, Cologne two years later),

and further inland (Erfurt, 1392, Leipzig in consequence of the emigration of the German students and professors from Prague, 1409, Rostock a northern colony of Erfurt, 1419), the so-called "German nation" first makes its appearance as one of the great divisions of the University of Paris, and after the English wars the name supersedes that of the "English nation" there. But the academical ascendancy of Paris declined and fell with the progress of the struggle against the dominion of the scholastic theology and philosophy of which she had been the great exponent and representative; while the policy of the Popes was willing enough to let her suffer for the prominent part she had played in upholding the supremacy of the General Councils. Thus continued the decentralisation (if I may rather loosely call it so) of university education which both in and outside France the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were to carry to so extraordinary a length. It was in the midst, and largely with the aid, of these changes that Germany entered into the full current of her share in the Renaissance movement. In the latter half of the fifteenth century, and the first few years of the sixteenth, not less than nine new German universities were added to the seven already in existence. Pomeranian Greifswalde (1456) takes the lead; in 1460 followed the famous foundation of Pope Pius II., assuredly one of the most intelligent and politic of all the Roman Pontiffs, the University of Basel. The terms of its foundation indeed remain to exemplify that power of appealing to the popular, one might

almost say to the democratic, spirit which in its happiest hours the Papacy has so well understood how to wield. But universities are not bulwarks against the movements of history, though Popes may build them up; and one cannot help thinking of another Pope, honest of purpose as he was humble of spirit (Adrian VI.) requesting a few generations later the glory of Basel—to Erasmus himself—to defend the cause of the Church, and of the cold reception given to the professorially voluble counsel. In the same year, 1460, was founded the University of Freiburg, one of the twin creation of a noble-minded woman, Mechthildis, Archduchess of Austria, who induced her husband to establish this university, as she afterwards induced her son, Duke Eberhard of Würtemberg, to establish the University of Tübingen—the Lady Margaret of German University history. Of Freiburg, too, as of Basel, we can hardly think without remembering Erasmus who in this ‘most delectable seat of the Muses,’ was to spend the much-honoured if not untroubled evening of his life; but its earlier days connect themselves rather with the name of a great jurist, Zasius, whose “angelical” lectures (for so one of his students describes them, though he was a lawyer) early raised the reputation of his University. Next came—both in 1472—the Universities of Ingolstadt and Treves. Ingolstadt was always to be celebrated for a theological orthodoxy, driven in later days into transnormal courses by the energy of the Jesuits, and in this earlier period it boasted teachers such as Eck, generally remembered only as Luther’s

successful (for the future of the Church of Rome, too successful) antagonistic at the Leipzig disputation, but in fact one of the most brilliant and, in some respects, open-minded teachers of his age. In 1477 followed Reuchlin's University of Tübingen, since the celebration of whose four-hundredth birthday the other day such a flood of academical tributes to its past has poured in upon those interested in such matters, and Mayence, whose fate it has not been to live so long. In the early years of the sixteenth century Wittenberg, the creation of the Elector of Saxony (1502), and Frankfort-on-the-Oder, that of the Elector of Brandenburg (1506), who had come to the conclusion that it was well for him also to do something for his neglected corner of the Empire, were added to the list.

Of the numbers of the students in this period we have no satisfactory statistics ; but when we hear of several of the universities usually admitting from 300 to 400 students, of Cologne towards the close of the century numbering, at one time, about 2,000, and Vienna either 5,000 or 7,000 students, and when we find the numbers of the teachers in liberal correspondence, we understand how large a current of the youthful life of the nation was now passing through its rapidly-increasing places of academical learning.

No mistake, I need hardly say, could be greater than to suppose that in the generality of these foundations, whether of a relatively earlier or later date, the moving spirit was one of innovation. The

conservatism of academical bodies is an old topic of remark, and a hackneyed theme of satire. But though this spirit of conservatism is in academical as well as in other spheres of life peculiarly prone to assume grotesque shapes, more especially when it finds itself in the extremes of recalcitrance, and the king must "to Oxford send a troop of horse," yet its real significance in each case depends upon the elements which compose it. Every one knows that in the Middle Ages not only were science and education almost exclusively in the hands of the clergy; but that to the Church the universities owed much of their wealth and the highest of the privileges on which their power and influence were based. Thus the Papal sanction had come to be held indispensable to the establishment of a new university; and in the latter half of the fifteenth century it was specially the policy of Rome to strengthen her hold upon academical education, where possible, by new foundations on the ancient lines. Of the seven universities created in Germany before the year 1456 *all*, of the nine established in the ensuing half-century *all but one*, had received their charters of foundation from the Popes. (The exception, to be sure, was a momentous one—Wittenberg.) Doubtless there was some measure of calculation in this (and the loyalty of the members of the universities to the Church was occasionally secured in sufficiently explicit forms—thus at Ingolstadt, a student taking his degree directly swore allegiance to St. Peter, the Church of Rome, and the existing Pope his lord). The chapters and monasteries often exerted

themselves so far as in them lay to flood the matriculation lists of the universities with members or dependents of their own bodies. Nearly everywhere the theological faculty held a privileged position; nearly everywhere the chancellorship was held by ecclesiastics, here and there none but they were admissible to the rectorship. And if thus the old studies were placed in a position of advantage against the coming rivalry of the new, the conservatism of the universities was at the same time largely, and not in all respects beneficially, fostered by collegiate and bursarial foundations which often proved specially unwilling to adapt themselves to the changes required from time to time in all systems of academical education.

The drawbacks involved in this historical relationship it seems to us easy enough to discern; and sympathise as we naturally may with much in the currents of Renascence and Reformation which seemed alike at first destined to break themselves against the opposition offered by many of these universities, we may for a moment feel inclined to ask whether it was not rather in spite of them than with their aid that these currents flowed onward. But we are apt to forget not only how much was accomplished even in the earlier part of this period, however gradually; but that the universities would not have been in harmony with the best efforts of their age and nation, had they not represented the endeavour to maintain unbroken the connexion imposed upon them by their historical origin.

I think it idle to deny that during this period, in

Germany as in England, the framework of the Church was still regarded by the consent of all who, in labouring for the intellectual, laboured at the same time for the moral progress of the people as necessary, as indispensable to the social edifice,—just as in Germany the framework of the Empire was still, and more enthusiastically, perhaps, than ever, regarded by patriotic minds as bound up with the greatness and welfare of the nation. It was the age in which, after the hopeful era of the great Councils had passed away, the attempt was made (and nowhere more eagerly and laboriously than in Germany) to revive the life of the Church by quickening the religious spirit of the people, and bringing all learning and education into harmony with, and to the aid of, these aspirations. Let us not refuse to recognise what all historical evidence seems to agree in attesting. Germany (I do not say alone, but more distinctly perhaps than any other country) was essaying the great experiment of a reform of the Church from within, and her noblest minds clung with pathetic hopefulness to what seemed to them a still possible task. Wherever one turns among the representative men of the earlier period of the German Renascence, one finds them basing their educational efforts on the same principle. It was the principle of that golden network of schools which had spread through the empire from the first foundations of the Confraternity of the Common Life, established by Gerard Groote in the Netherlands, to whose connexion with the greatest names of later mysticism I need but advert. It was the principle

of the life and labours of Nicolas Cusanus—Nicolas of Cues on the Moselle—whose career is one sustained endeavour in the combined causes of religious revival and educational reform, whose reorganising activity shrank not from the conception of reforming the Papal Curia itself, and whose open mind welcomed and fostered the classical studies for which he brought materials from the shores of the Bosphorus, and anticipated part of the greatest discovery of modern astronomical science. Cusanus was a prince of the Church ; but the same principle is to be found pervading the efforts of men of learning and education pure and simple. One of these was Agricola, whose stainless name dignifies the long and mingled roll of the wandering scholars of this restless century, who hoped that Germany might become more Latin than Latium, and whose scholarship drew from Erasmus expressions little short of adoration. Others were Agricola's friend and pupil, Hegius, the simple schoolmaster to whom German classical scholarship may be said to owe its foundation, which he first laid by establishing it as the central subject of school training ; and Wimpheling, the author of the first methodical expositions of national education, the pride of that seminary of sound learning, Alsatian Schlettstadt. All these, whose names I choose merely as the most representative, were at one with regard to the great aim of their endeavours. But not only the names of men or of women—for the German Renaissance too has its heroines, like the Italian, and none of them recalls a more beautiful type of gentle culture and heroic endurance than

that of Charitas Pirkheimer, the abbess of the Clares of Nürnberg—bear testimony to this endeavour at combining new and old ; whole cities may be said to have built up their educational life on this basis of *pietas litterata*, as it was afterwards called by John Sturm of Strassburg, who in later days preserved not a little of this earlier character of the German Renaissance.

We know how fitful and how imperfect was the support given to this great conservative revival in the quarter whence support in the shape of reform would have most effectively come. We know that the ignorance and corruption which operated in a contrary direction were deep and widespread, although we do not believe every word that Erasmus says against the monks. And we understand why at the universities and schools much in the old studies could not be in substance saved by engrafting upon them the new ; for in educational life, too, there are periods when the physician must make room for the surgeon ; and even the words of Erasmus seem to fall short of the necessities of the case when he protests of the “good” or new learning,—that “not for this purpose was it introduced into the schools to drive out the old learning, but that the latter might be pursued with more purity and method.” For much in the old methods, and for many of the old teachers, the day of compromise was passing away. It was necessary that learning and education should not be separated from their connexion with, but taken out of the absolute control of, the clergy, and that the

laity should learn to concern themselves with these matters, just as in the same age they were beginning to understand that the management of the poor and the conduct of charity were affairs with which, in their civic communities, they had a direct concern. And of the old methods much was to be thrust aside for ever. From the most elementary to the most honoured of studies all were to be benefited by the change. Students were to forget the Donatus of the *Doctrinale* in order to learn Latin grammar itself (whether or not in expectation of the golden age when, in the opinion of the excellent Dean Colet, languages might be learnt without any grammar at all); they were to compass the act of declining substantives without confounding their wits over the question whether the vocative is a case or not; and they were to read the Socratic dialogues of Plato in lieu of disputing whether, supposing Plato said, "Sortes¹ shall be cursed, if he has cursed me," and Sortes said, "Plato shall be cursed, if he has not cursed me,"—whether in this case Plato has cursed Sortes or not. And if classical learning was to be established as the basis of higher education, and to remain respected as such by both Protestant and Catholic teachers—till future ages were on it to find a footing from which to strive onwards, in the meanwhile no science was to benefit more from both the method and the substance of the new studies than theology, destined so soon again to absorb the chief part of the academical activity of the nation.

¹ A scholastic abbreviation for Socrates.

These changes, then, or rather the changes of which these are mere suggestions, the conservatism of educational life was not to prevent, and its unworthier elements, sluggishness, prejudice, force of habit, were to collapse in their endeavour permanently to prevent them. But the real service of that union between religious and educational ideas which the nobler part of the conservatism of this period had in view was this—that it prevented the whole educational system of which the universities formed part from breaking into fragments ; and that in an age when the pursuit of knowledge was doubly seductive by the novelty and the brilliancy of the paths it opened, this pursuit was largely if not altogether preserved from the danger of being carried on without reference to its educational ends. German humanism, in individual cases perhaps, but never as a whole movement, lost its balance or ended in a slough of despond—yes, a slough of despond—like its Italian contemporary ; and Germany may be held fortunate in that her educational life in this period was not estranged from the highest ideals of life which the age and the nation possessed. It is surely unnecessary to add that each age must reckon with its own conditions and its own means ; and of all situations in the world's history there is none more unique than that which precedes the great disruption of the Church of the West—none of which, so far as we can discern the conditions, have more absolutely passed away.

There is a second feature in the German university life of this period which connects itself in some

measure with that already adverted to. You know how cosmopolitan was the university life of the Middle Ages; and even in this period, when Italy still seemed the promised land of scholarly research and culture, and when Ulrich von Hutten could taunt his countrymen with being regarded at Rome as born to be drawers of water and grooms of horses, the German universities were largely frequented by foreign students. Thus, to take two examples from the north and the south of the empire respectively, the University of Rostock on the Baltic shores, even after the foundation early in the last quarter of the century of the Universities of Upsala and Copenhagen, was regarded as the natural resort of Scandinavian students.¹ Ingolstadt (the University of Eck and of Conrad Celtes, the first crowned "poet" among the German humanists, who visited every German university in turn, and to whom one of the most ancient and important among them, Vienna, owed its transformation in this period) attracted to its lecture-rooms Italians and Spaniards, Frenchmen and Englishmen, Hungarians and Poles. But

¹ I do not know, by the by, whether to this is to be attributed the extremely high spirit of the Rostockians as recorded by one of the contributors to the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, who reports from that seat of learning:—*Rostockienses sunt magni inimici Parrhisiensium*, the Rostockians are great enemies of the Parisians, *quia Parrhisienses habent unum statutum*, because the Parisians have a statute, *quod non accipiunt ad facultatem suam magistros Rostockienses*, that they will not admit to their faculty at Paris, masters of arts of Rostock. *Et sic Rostockienses etiam non accipiunt Parrhisienses*, and so in return the Rostockians do not admit the Parisians.

notwithstanding this circumstance, and the fact that many of the universities as the creations of particular princes (such as Heidelberg, Freiburg, Tübingen, and the electoral Universities of Wittenberg and Frankfort-on-Oder) were specially connected with special parts of the Empire—there is a broadly patriotic character in much of the academical life and labours of this age. We are accustomed to regard humanism or humanity as primarily identical with the cultivation of the ancient classical tongues ; we readily remember the pride with which the author of the *Colloquia* proclaimed his ignorance of any modern tongue that could be of vulgar use to him, and the scorn with which professors and poets in general looked down upon the barbarous speech in which it was unfortunately necessary for them to talk to their households and the outer world.

‘ Our Grekis theyr Greke so well have applyed,
That they cannot say in Greke, rydyng by the way :
How, hosteler, fetch me hors a botell of hay ! ’

Thus we often forget the services which the New Learning, in the hands of some of the most thoughtful, if the more modest, of its votaries, rendered to those studies from which patriotism has always drawn its directest inspirations. Among these the study of national history was, in England less, in Germany more, immediately vitalised by, if it may not be said to have actually begun with, the Renaissance. More particularly in that fertile and noble borderland, which whether its eyes have been

turned eastward or westward has ever poured into the lap of the country to which its fortunes have been attached a prodigal wealth of intellectual effort—more particularly in Alsace, German history now began to be written with a special view to the training and encouragement of the young, at all times the heirs of the national future. Strassburg was not indeed then a university in name; it had not become such even after John Sturm had completed the organisation of its educational institutions,—but it had long been a centre of the highest intellectual life of the nation, a place, if any, where the love of learning had associated itself with patriotic sentiment and inspiring religious thought. Here where the traditions of the great mystics had culminated in Johannes Tauler's life-long devotion to his task of raising and purifying the people; here where the "trumpet of Strassburg," the voice of the great preacher Geiler von Kaisersberg, had so long sounded in the ears of his generation; and where the grim and sober, but uncommonly real and direct, satire of Sebastian Brant—the *Ship of Fools*—had supplied the pulpit of his friend with a novel series of texts; here had come into honour with the German tongue the pursuit and study of the national history.

Brant was a historian by profession and inclination; while it was Geiler who led Wimpheling to begin the historical labours which rose to the first attempt by a humanist at a general German history. Following these in Strassburg, Johannes Sleidanus (of Schleiden in the Eifel), as the acknowledged

chief and long sole authority for the history of the contemporary Reformation age, and in the neighbouring Schlettstadt the famous Beatus Rhenanus, a really critical and candid as well as patriotic historian, handed down across intervening generations the study in which the learning and labours of German scholarship have in later times gained some of their most enduring laurels. The study of history was no stranger to the German Universities and the Renascence ; at Tübingen, for instance, the historian Nauclerus was probably the most distinguished, certainly the most influential, among the earlier teachers there.

To Sebastian Brant (who wrote a life of the Emperor Titus with the sole object of bringing out the comparison) the reigning Emperor Maximilian was the *deliciæ generis humani* ; but there is the spirit of a free citizen in his flattery. These educational influences helped to produce the national enthusiasm which pervades the political life of Germany in the reign of Maximilian—a prince whose career and character are not above criticism, but who was as typical of national ideals to many of the best of his contemporaries and subjects as was our Queen Elizabeth of at least equally chequered memory to hers. For this national spirit, after it had proved impossible to unite it with the current of the Reformation, the disintegrating consequences of the Reformation itself, which the organism of the empire was too impotent to absorb and too rotten to withstand, proved too strong ; and the Universities

followed the tendencies and destinies of the particular states to which they belonged. It is not absolutely impossible that they might have more persistently continued to represent such national aspirations as survived had they from the first been more frequently established in the great seats of free civic life, instead of being so largely dependent upon princes, secular or ecclesiastical ; if for instance the wish which arose once in the fourteenth and once again in the sixteenth century to establish a university in the imperial city of Frankfort-on-the-Main had been carried into execution, the result must have proved a peculiarly interesting experiment. But, even so, the academical Renaissance in Germany, before the fiery days when Ulrich von Hutten sought with its aid in the first instance to stir the patriotic passions of the land, contributed to foster and sustain its public spirit, and thus fulfilled a function which is among the most important of the indirect influences of academical life. Not only by the aid of those studies which directly concern themselves with the national past, or of those which variously help to make men active and useful citizens, but by helping to determine the tone and temper, so to speak, of a nation's youth, have universities in many ages and in many nations contributed to foster that public spirit which is the salt of the life of a community and of the nation. Of all philistinisms the most pitiable is that of a cultivated—often painfully cultivated—indifference to the duties which are not the prerogative of the better trained, but which the better trained should be among

the best qualified to perform. If there is one weakness which academical life should be capable of eradicating from its midst, it is the weakness of *pococuranti*, the characterlessness of whose careers has been so well described by the pleasantest of our Augustan poets :

‘ Without love, hatred, joy, or fear,
They led a kind of—as it were ;
Nor wish’d nor cared, nor laughed nor cried,
And so they lived and so they died.’

What I said just now as to historical learning illustrates the fact that it was not only the study of the ancient classics (whether as to form or as to both form and subject) which profited from the influence of the Renaissance movement upon German academical life. The comprehensiveness of the range of university studies in this period is indeed not a feature likely to appear to the generality of modern students so noteworthy as perhaps it is ; and, as a matter of course, there was about this comprehensiveness much that was merely tentative. If, however, we take an example, we may be better able to estimate the widely and multifariously reinvigorating nature of the changes often summarised under the name of humanistic reform. The University of Vienna, whose institutions had been largely copied by the new foundations (Freiburg for instance), had sunk into evident decay in the later years of the long and inglorious reign of the Emperor Frederick III. But with the accession of Maximilian active measures of reform began. Not only was special encouragement here given

to the *realia*, as they were more or less loosely called, viz., mathematics, astronomy, and physics ; not only was the flower of the more aspiring students brought together in the curiously duplicate *collegium poëtarum et mathematicorum*—a seminary, as one might be tempted to call it, of classical and mathematical honour men ; but the spirit of which humanism was the representative influenced almost all the principal branches of university studies. There was no doubt a danger lest the assiduous cultivation of the classical languages might run into a sheer devotion to form ; and that generations might pipe away laborious days as Latin versifiers. But this danger was lessened by the attention simultaneously paid to the geographical and historical disciplines ; and while the scholastic methods were banished from grammatical and philosophical instruction, a fuller sense was also awakened of the importance of physical and mathematical studies. By strengthening the study of the Roman law, humanism here (as it afterwards did in so marked a degree in France) helped to draw closer the connexion between the university and the public life of the State, though (as some of my hearers are aware), with results of doubtful advantage for the continuity of the national life ; while the advance of biological studies conferred indisputable benefit upon the labours of that faculty which in after times was to contribute so signally to the academical reputation of Vienna—the faculty of medicine.

It would not be difficult, I suppose, to parallel the results of the new movement from the history of other

contemporary German universities, though nowhere can they have become more rapidly perceptible than at Vienna. Thus at the close of this period when, owing to the absorbing interests of the times, controversial theology was to occupy the best academical forces of the nation, we find Melancthon, whose generous and widely-cultivated mind could not be absorbed by the claims of any single science, expounding his conceptions of the range of the higher studies with a truly generous breadth. He speaks, no doubt, as a theologian whose cardinal maxim it is that an unlearned theology is an Iliad of evils, and who desires that this science may be nourished by all the rest. But with how catholic a sympathy he urges the uses of grammar, of dialectics, of moral and physical science, and pleads for a philosophic study of medicine and jurisprudence ! To me almost every utterance of that generous mind seems to breathe the spirit of true piety ; yet how vast a step forward has been made by him from the earlier mediæval conceptions of the uses of learning, like that of Rhabanus Maurus, for instance, who held that ‘ rhetoric ought to be studied in order that we may understand the figurative expressions of Holy Writ ; poetry, so that we may ascertain the right rhythm of the psalms ; dialectics, so that we may confute the false conclusions of heretics ; arithmetic, so that we may decipher the mystic numbers of Scripture ; geometry, so that we may arrive at correct conceptions of the sacred edifices ; astronomy, so that we may fix aright the holidays of the Church.’ Still, the comprehen-

siveness of a university system must always be relative ; and nothing would be easier than to show how far a Renaissance age fell short even of a modest ideal in this direction, while much that it had gained was gained only for a time. But, on the whole, the universities of which I am speaking exhibit a cautious and rational progress in the direction of extension of studies, if the limited range of the subjects (especially the scientific) open to their age be taken into account. It is noteworthy that the number of teachers was even in this period extremely large ; and there is evidence that a great deal of power was wasted by simultaneous lecturing on the same subjects in the same university.

But far more striking beyond doubt than the comprehensiveness of range which I cannot, speaking relatively, regard as wholly absent from the academical systems of this period, is the *thoroughness* of which humanism proper set the example in its own special field. Thoroughness—the great aim of the true, the bugbear of the sham student—of the boy who wishes somehow to say his lesson, of the youth who wishes somehow to pass his examination, of the man who wishes somehow to make his speech or bring out his book ! Melanchthon, when touching on the reprehensible want of ardour and constancy as learners of the academical youth of his day, relates how the eminent mathematician Johannes Stoefflerus was wont to say that if he could infuse the whole of the mathematics into a single draught, and brew them into a gruel of the more liquid sort, he doubted

whether he should be able to induce his students to come often enough and stay long enough for him to pour the entire decoction through a funnel down their throats. The classical scholars of the Renaissance set the example of a thirst for knowledge and culture of a particular kind, which may justly be described as a desire for thoroughness, and which, as such, marks them as true students, and has rendered their fraternity for ever memorable in the annals of learning. Their contemptuous disregard for other men and other ways, their self-conceit and their want of measure in their admiration for their own leaders, are on the other hand characteristics savouring of pedantry ; and it is not wonderful that even in Germany the movement should, during the brief period of its ascendancy, have contrived in some ways to outlive itself.

It is to the later part of the period of which I am speaking that the most typical academical representatives of this body of men belong. Reuchlin, the man of the three tongues (Latin, Greek, and Hebrew), but something besides a linguistic scholar, and his cause were to furnish them with a war-cry ; Erasmus, cosmopolitan in his wanderings as in his fame, was rather their glorious distant luminary than the standard-bearer of their actual struggles for ascendancy. Of the most ardent and advanced group among the later body of humanists, one German university, to which I have already referred at the outset of these observations, became the chosen home. The history of the University of Erfurt, which Kamp-

schulte has written in a masterly monograph, centres in the endeavours of Mutianus and his disciples, as they took pride in calling themselves, to make the Thuringian seat of learning the representative seminary of the humanistic studies. Already Maternus, the leading spirit of the preceding period in the history of the university, had raised it to a prominent position among those which readily opened their doors to the new learning without entering into any internecine conflict with the traditions of the old studies. Kindred spirits had been associated with him ; but already under his *régime* the younger and less compromising adherents of the new studies, the 'poets,' as they loved to be called, had begun to form themselves into a distinct school or party. Under the leadership of Mutianus, this fraternity soon assumed the attitude of open hostility towards the 'sophists,' as they contemptuously called their opponents, little thinking that the day was to come when they in their turn were to be decried under the same opprobriously-intended name.

They survived the troublous days of a civic revolution which annihilated half the treasures of the university, but by specially impoverishing its endowed foundations, facilitated the placing of its life and studies on a new and wider basis. It was now, in the second decennium of the tenth century, that the fraternity of the humanists at Erfurt gained the mastery over the studies of the place, and became the heralds and agents of the triumph which, in the opinion of the world of culture at large, Reuchlin cele-

brated over his persecutors. For there can be little doubt that to the Erfurt brotherhood, and more especially to one of its members (Crotus Rubianus), is to be ascribed the main authorship of the most effective production of the Renascence spirit in its conflict with the representatives of worn-out scholasticism. The *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum* in their effect surpassed even the *Encomium Moriæ* of Erasmus itself, among other reasons because of their superior directness, for while in the earlier satire it is an allegorical (and not always consistent) Folly who speaks, in the later it is the invariably consistent Fools themselves. At the same time we must not suppose that all the victims of the satire (its chief victim, for instance, Magister Ortuin Gratus, of Cologne,) were actually the types in which it presents them. There is no such thing as personal justice in Hudibrastic literature; but the conflict and its provocation were typical, and so was its result.

This band of scholars included many whose names are forgotten in the history of the Renascence; above all, Eobanus Hessus, who after the withdrawal of Mutianus persevered in upholding the standard they had jointly erected, but for whom in the end the troubles of the times proved too strong, as they did for the university which he loved, and served, and celebrated in his verse. That university, and more especially the *sodalitium Eobani*, had warmly welcomed the movement of the monk who at Erfurt itself had, as he says, taken his degree on the strength of the writings of the Anti-Roman Erfurt teacher, John of Wesel;

its theological faculty had publicly condemned the papal bull launched against Luther ; and Erfurt seemed destined to play a part in the history of the Reformation analogous to that which it had played in the history of the Renaissance. But this was not to be. The Reformation movement entered into a phase which separated Luther from his own extreme followers ; throughout large parts of Germany the democratic spirit of the towns was aroused against the ruling oligarchies ; the peasantry began its hopeless struggle for half-reasonable, half-impossible ends ; and at the head of the clamouring multitudes, stood the preachers as they proclaimed themselves to be of the pure Gospel. The alliance was at an end between academical liberalism and religious reform. The University of Erfurt was desolated by the troubles of the times ; its famous teachers, the humanists, were now derided as the sophists ; their lecture-rooms stood empty, their occupation was gone. But though the lives of many of them closed in dreariness and despondency, while others had fallen back into an attitude of hostility, or sought to maintain one of neutrality towards the great religious Revolution—for it was now seen to be nothing less—yet their labours had not been in vain.

I wish that time had remained for me to attempt to sketch the activity of some of these men as scholars and teachers. As it is I can hardly speak of even one of them, whose portrait more than one writer has essayed. Helius Eobanus Hessus, as he wrote himself with triple name, *more Romano*,

taking his cognomen from his native land and his prænomen partly with the intent that there should be no doubt concerning his relations to Phœbus Apollo—was saluted by his admiring friends and by Reuchlin himself as the king of the poets; he was the Ben Jonson of his circle in the veneration he enjoyed from it, as well as in his capacity for work and for relaxation. His robust nature enabled him to accept without fear or faltering the movement of Luther, and to maintain his sympathy for the bold Reformer to the last. But as a scholar he is especially remarkable for the *thoroughness* with which he performed the task of his life—that of familiarising his generation with classical literature (or getting by translation), and bringing into honour the art, indispensable to all closer scholarship, of classical composition. It was he of whom Erasmus said (with perhaps less felicity than usual) that he had attained to what Cicero had failed to compass—for he wrote prose as if he had never served the Muses, and poetry as if he had never come into contact with pedestrian speech. Eobanus and his friends, instead of talking a great deal *about* the classics and the classical tongues, brought the ancient writers themselves and their speech home to the studies of their age; they sought to possess themselves of their materials instead of nibbling at them here and there, each attaching himself more especially to one classical writer as his chosen subject; and thus, though their own range was often limited, and though their worship of the outward form was perhaps raised to excess, yet

they set to their age the example of a scientific enthusiasm and a scholarly thoroughness to be appreciated even by those who take no joy in, or may see reason to find fault with, Eobanus' hexameters and hendecasyllables. It is not purely as classical scholars that all the members of his band, among whom in their days of daring flitted the unquiet spirit of Ulrich von Hutten, are to be remembered; there was at least one famous theologian among them and a physician; but it is in classical studies that they found their bond of union, and in their proficiency in these that they may be looked upon as a school. And it is *schools* such as this, formed among kindred spirits engaged in kindred pursuits, which constitute the *characterising* elements of universities, as this did in the great days of the University of Erfurt.

Does it seem strange, in days when the field of academical studies has become as wide and varied as it is now—even among ourselves, and far more signally in Germany—to dwell with emphasis on the significance for academical life of the *thorough* cultivation of particular branches of study? Does it seem frivolous to point, as to a memorable example of academical effort, to the labours of men whose aims may seem to us curiously special, and whose ideals we may judge to bear no comparison to our own? Though classical scholarship itself includes in our eyes many things which it did not and could not include in those of the humanists of whom I have been speaking, and though classical scholarship is but one of the many branches of academical study it is our

wish to see cultivated among and around us, yet in the thoroughness of these students, which was the result of their enthusiasm, lies the feature entitling them to our respect and challenging our imitation. A university which fails to train scholars in the wider sense of the word to which men of science have a right to lay claim, or which, if they will renounce their claim to a specific title, fails to train men of science in the sense of the appellation in which linguistic and other scholars were entitled to share it, has no future of enduring influence before it. There are dead universities which have never been buried ; the life of a university lies neither in its matriculation-registers nor even in its degree-lists ; it lies in the spirit of thoroughness which it fosters and communicates to its members ; it lies in the schools of research which it founds and sends forth. No one can say in what field a particular university may succeed in being or remaining pre-eminently active and influential ; though circumstances will naturally lend their aid in particular directions. Very few of the German universities were, like Tübingen, early urged in the special direction in which they have gained their greenest laurels ; and at the present day, as you are aware, their respective pre-eminence in connexion with particular branches of study has been liable to frequent changes. Whether in Germany or elsewhere, it is not in the nature of things that a university should shine equally in all its departments of teaching. But the spirit which sustains effort and creates the desire for thoroughness

is not the product of circumstances only or chiefly ; it is one of the most natural, as it is one of the noblest, emanations of a really vigorous academical life.

The substance of these remarks, in which it had been very far from my wish to include anything with a controversial tendency, had been put on paper last month, when it so happened that my attention was attracted by an article in one of the periodical magazines, entitled *The Multiplication of Universities*. I should not, at the close of the address which may have already overtaxed your patience, have made any reference to this most recent contribution to the discussion of a question in which no one here can fail to take some measure of interest, were it not for two reasons. In the first place, the author of this paper is Mr. J. Bass Mullinger, of St. John's College, Cambridge, a writer whose labours in the field of academical history have already obtained for him merited distinction, and whose admirable *History of the University of Cambridge from the earliest Time to the Royal Injunctions of 1535*, has of late been to me—incidentally even for one or the other point in this morning's observations—a source of frequent reference and information. In the second place, Mr. Mullinger's paper, professing to point out what guidance may be gained from the past history of Universities in discussing the question as to the establishment of new centres of university training, includes in its survey much of the ground whence I

had derived the suggestions of my present address. His brief essay in its longer or historical part distinguishes perspicuously between the three well-known stages in the history of European universities—the first in which they were cosmopolitan or European (the period of the ascendancy, though not the undisputed ascendancy of Paris), the second in which they were ethnical or national (the period in which the ascendancy of Paris came to an end, and among other universities those of which I have been speaking this morning were established), and the third in which the universities, so he says, became provincial and sectarian (the post-Reformation period, when in Germany the universities became exclusively Catholic or Protestant, and even the Protestant universities were severally appropriated to the control of distinct theological tendencies). He touches on similar phenomena in other countries; but it is from German university life that he prefers chiefly to illustrate his argument. He shows that it was not till the close of the seventeenth century that the movement began whereby the German universities regained their national, if not their cosmopolitan character, and that this great recovery was necessarily attended by the incorporation of several of the old and worn-out foundations with newer and more vigorous growths, and by the extinction of others which had come to be recognised as superfluous.

Now the few hints on which I have ventured this morning as to the true character of university endeavours and university life, so far as they are

things of the present and not of the past, when the chief peoples of Europe had not yet established their educational life on a distinctly though not exclusively national basis, may have prepared you for a ready assent on my part to Mr. Mullinger's conclusion that the national university would appear to be the highest practicable conception in the present age. Such a university, as he justly observes, postulates not merely adequate material resources but a certain numerical strength. Such an institution, as he rightly adds, depends for the elevation of its thought, the dignity of its relations, and the due extension of its influence, on the elimination of all that is provincial, petty, and sectarian. It seems a necessary corollary that such centres of intellectual culture rather than of mere acquisition do not admit of indefinite multiplication.

So far I had read, and I had likewise agreed to the moderately-put statement that, whatever may be said of the past, the last quarter of the century has been marked by a series of eminently successful efforts on the part of Oxford and Cambridge towards the realisation of a high national ideal—when I came in eye-shot of the close of Mr. Mullinger's article, where in its last page and a half the application seemed at last to be imminent. The present time would, he says, appear to afford little justification of any attempt to institute in this country the provincial in opposition to the national university. Manchester, he assumes, is proposing such an experiment; and already, as he has learnt, Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, and Nottingham are designated as the seats of new and

independent universities, conducting their own examinations and conferring their own degrees. Mr. Mullinger is evidently terrified by a vision of a kind of academical commune ; and seems to imagine a plan on foot for the foundation of a new university in every important town in England, which might certainly have the result of creating a number of 'petty' if not necessarily 'sectarian' centres. I do not know who are the 'designating' persons he has in view ; I only know that of the towns mentioned by him one (Leeds) has openly advocated the plan intended to prevent the foundation of a multiplicity of new centres, and eventually aiming at the incorporation of its own college in a university of a federal type—while another (Nottingham) has avowed its desire of 'acting with the University of Cambridge,'—an expression which I do not undertake to define, but which certainly does not seem to indicate a desire to become 'the seat of a new and independent university.'

Not very consistently with his fears of indefinite multiplication, Mr. Mullinger proceeds to speak of a second unhappy scheme entertained, as it seems, by those whom he describes as the advocates of a charter for Manchester. It is the vision of a great central school of scientific teaching with affiliated colleges throughout the country. A deplorable prospect is thus held out of science and letters, philosophy and theology, tradition and invention, drawing off into rival and hostile centres of education and instruction. What are the facts ? The scheme which has been put forth from Manchester contemplates the possibility of

uniting with our own College into a single university other colleges, which on due consideration, and eventually after appeal to the supreme educational authority of the Government, shall have been proved to possess a reasonably complete curriculum and a reasonably complete teaching-staff in the departments of *Arts and Science* at least. And the central school of scientific teaching is a left-handedly complimentary and an imperfectly correct description of our own College itself, with the means and opportunities belonging to it in all its departments, and with a system of instruction which never has been and never can be (according to the charter of our foundation) confined to a single side of academical teaching. The eminence of our scientific school, of which it is, I hope, not unbecoming in a professor who has no share in its labours or honours to express his recognition, has not led either the authorities or the teachers and students of Owens College to regard it as absorbing either the efforts or the destinies, whatever those destinies may prove to be, of the College at large. It certainly has no intention of relinquishing or prejudicing its efforts in other directions, even though for some time to come those who in it pursue the older studies may look to a modest place among their academical representatives, well content if they may in due season be accounted

‘*Extremi primorum, extremis usque priores.*’

Finally, Mr. Mullinger has discovered, and supports his discovery by a quotation which I have not cared

to verify, from what he describes as 'one of the latest manifestoes of the supporters' of our scheme, that it is conceived in a spirit unfriendly to the old universities. I may leave the author of the article from which he quotes to take care of himself; but being tolerably well acquainted with what has been written and said by those who have acted as representatives of our College in this matter, I may inform Mr. Mullinger that he absolutely mistakes the tone and spirit in which its action has been carried on. It has neither been forgotten what is due to the national traditions, nor what is due to the actual labours of the two Universities, with one or the other of which many of us are connected by ties of personal piety as well as of national pride; and if those Universities, which are not beyond criticism for the very reason that they *are* national institutions, have their shortcomings; it is not as a mere corrective to these that we desire to secure for our own academical life a broad and nationally recognised basis. If the university to which some of us aspire cannot rise above the 'local prejudice' (whatever that may signify) of a part of England which has not been usually accounted devoid of national spirit, or slack in national effort—if there is any reasonable ground for apprehending that a system of education such as it has been from the first our bounden duty to maintain and seek to perfect, and such as has with us certainly not selected its agents on any unduly assimilative principle, will be precipitated into 'the cliqueism of a school,'—if our per-

formance of our own tasks prove incompatible with a willingness to recognise the services of other and more venerable seats of learning—then, indeed, the misgivings of our most recent critic will have been verified. But he owes his readers the proof of his mistrust of us on each of these heads ; and though we do not resent it as an insult when he charges us with ‘ provincial ambition,’ we may ask what right he has to assume ours to be other than *national* ends. His historical argument, if it is worth anything at all, shows that a rapid, almost simultaneous, and so far as local distribution goes, wholly unsystematic *multiplication* of universities is likely to outrun the national need, to necessitate eventual revision, and even (where particular interests are strong enough to prevail) to prejudice the progress of national higher education on its broadest lines. In what way or sense does it prove that there is anything imprudent in the *addition* of a single national university to the number already existing in this country—on conditions not only giving securities to the present, but safeguarding the interests without foreclosing the policy of the future ? How far this is a correct description of the scheme which has been proposed on behalf of this College, the present is not a fitting occasion to discuss. But whatever the future may have in store, we may in all tranquillity adhere to the conviction that the usefulness of a seat of academical education must in any case primarily depend upon the efforts of its teachers and students. Elevation of aim, patriotism of spirit,

comprehensiveness of system, thoroughness of method—these features of true academical work it seemed worth while even cursorily to illustrate from the records of a time and a nation with which our own have something in common, however widely our means and opportunities may differ from theirs.

NOTE.

SINCE this address was delivered, I have noticed that in a contribution to the Bulletin historique of the *Revue Historique* (Paris) for September-October, 1878, Mr. Mullinger has repeated the substance of the mis-apprehensions noticed by me in his paper in *Fraser's Magazine*. It is unnecessary to recur to these, or to enquire what are Mr. Mullinger's grounds for the illustrative observation, that en Allemagne, sur 35 établissements universitaires environ, 10 à peine méritent le nom d'universités.' But I feel bound not to pass by the following additional information offered by Mr. Mullinger to his French readers. 'Le Collège d'Owen,' he says, 'est depuis longtemps un remarquable établissement d'instruction supérieure pour la ville et sa banlieue; le nombre de ses élèves (quoique beaucoup d'entre eux ne soient que des enfants) est considérable.' As a matter of fact, Owens College draws its students from a far wider district than Manchester and its immediate vicinity, as well as in many cases from a distance; and the ages of those students in the Day Classes (exclusively of the Medical School) of the College stood as follows at the beginning of the Session 1877-8:—

Age at entrance.	No. of students.
Under 16 years	18
Between 16 and 18	134
„ 18 „ 20	118
About 20	148
	418

The students entering under 16 years of age are required to pass a special preliminary examination. I am afraid that Mr. Mullinger is as little acquainted with the College about which he writes as with the proposals which he has taken upon himself to criticise.

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